ISSN 0712-7774

AARDV AHEIM PRESENTS

CEREBUS

42
SEP

$1.50

GARRISON

T'ANA

Campaign's End

A Note from the Publisher

With this issue, it's time to stop worrying about the tour. By the time # 42 is shipped, problems such as trying to get discounts on hotel chains, or keeping transportation costs down on one-way flights will be solved.

Meanwhile, Dave and I have been corresponding with Fred Patten lately (the head of the Friends of Cerebus Club). The fan club is on the verge of an expansion and Dave and I are trying to keep in touch a little better than before. I'm hoping we'll see some of the members of the Fan Club in Los Angeles while we are there on the tour. If you are a member, get in touch with Fred so we can make some arrangement to meet as many of you as we can while we are in L.A. I hope that those members that live in various cities around the US will be dropping by to say hello when we are in their area.

On the letters page this issue, Scott Campbell suggests that I look into the possibility of getting Michael T. Gilbert to do a Wraith story for Unique Stories. Well, in this issue we do indeed have a Michael T. Gilbert story, although it is not a Wraith story. (We will be having a Wraith story in Michael's upcoming book, "Strange Brew". It will be out by the end of this year.) The story in this issue is one of his Tiny Terror Tales, a series that Michael conceived especially for Unique Stories. The story is done with "Smilin' Ed" artist Raoul Vezina. Raoul and Michael go back a long way. In fact, the two attended the same college and got together when Michael wanted to publish his own comic book, "New Paltz Comics", in 1972. Michael and Raoul haven't worked together on a story in the ten years that have passed since then. I'm quite pleased that two artists that we enjoy so much have been given the opportunity to work together again. Michael took a trip to New York to work on the stories with Raoul, and while he was there he finally met Will Eisner. He described it to me as one of the biggest thrills of his life. With "Flush", Michael is making his first attempt at what he refers to as "a silent story". Please let us know if you'd like to see more stories by Michael T. Gilbert in Unique Stories and if you'd like to see more projects with him.

Last year, Dave was nominated for two awards from the Small Press Writers and Artists Association. This year, he received in the mail two awards from them. The first was awarded to Dave for best writer in the field of comics. The second was awarded to Cerebus the Aardvark for best magazine in the field of comics. Dave has just now gone down to the studio to put them up on what we like to call "the award wall" at the studio. It's kinda nice to see this stuff where he works every day.

One of the real pleasures for Dave and I this month, was that the play "Annie" finally came to Kitchener. We had discussed the possibility of seeing it when we first heard that the play would be coming here (a minor miracle for a place the size of Kitchener), but we hadn't expected that we would enjoy it half as much as we did. There is something totally refreshing about a story that is as optimistic as Annie. I have also never seen an "art form" that has so totally captivated Dave's imagination.

One other project that Dave and I are working on is The Cerebus Collector. This will be a companion book to the regular monthly comic for our readers, with unpublished sketches and interviews and a bit of a peek at how Dave actually evolves the story. We haven't finished compiling it yet, but you should be able to get it from your local distributor sometime in 1983. Keep in touch with this page as more details about this and other projects come to light.

Also, Dave has done a strip for EPIC entitled "Arnold the Isshurian". I can't really tell you too much about it, except that it will, of course, be funny. The release date for the issue of EPIC that it will be in, (EPIC #16) should be around the end of November or the beginning of December, according to Mary Jo Duffy. So you folks can just go out there and show Marvel how wonderful an idea it is to have Dave doing a story for them. Although, truth be told, Mary Jo told me that they were *really* pleased to be putting the story in, so maybe it's now just a matter of fulfilling their expectations.

That's it for this issue! I'll see you next time around!!

Deni

CEREBUS

VOL. 1 NO. 42 SEPTEMBER 1982

Publisher
Deni Sim

Distributors:
Bud Plant Inc.
P.O. Box 1886
Grass Valley, CA 95945

Pacific Comics
P.O. Box 99217
San Diego, CA 92109

Glenwood Distribution
124 Vandalia St.
Collinsville, IL 62234

Capital City Distributors
2827 Perry Street
Madison, WI 53713

Diamond Comics
Distributors Inc.
1720 Belmont Ave.
Bay B - 2
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Now & Then Books
103 Queen St. South
Kitchener, Ontario, Canada
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Andromeda Publications
323 Queen St. W.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M5V 2A4

Titan Distributors
P.O. Box 250
London, E3 4RT England

Cerebus Fan Club
c/o Fred Patten
11863 West Jefferson Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90230
Membership . . . $8.00 per year

Advertising (design)
Abraxas Studio
Richard Bruning
P.O. Box 1606
Madison, WI 53701

CEREBUS THE AARDVARK is published fifteen times a year by Aardvark-Vanaheim Inc., P.O. Box 1674 Station 'C', Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2, including three "Swords of Cerebus" in winter, spring and fall.

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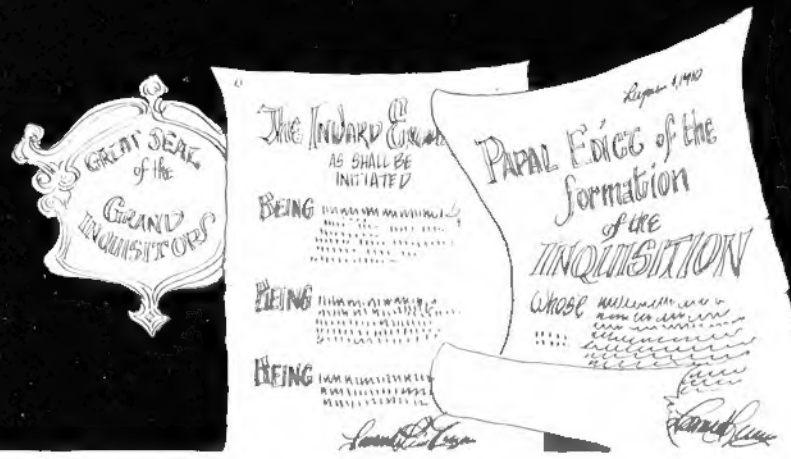
Advertising rates furnished on request. Printed in Canada by Preney Print and Litho Inc., Windsor, Ontario.

Cerebus the Aardvark

UNLESS ONE UNDERSTANDS THE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS, IN CONTEXT, WHICH LED TO THE ELECTION, IT BECOMES DIFFICULT TO APPRECIATE THE PROFOUND CHAOS THE CITY-STATE OF IEST LIVED THROUGH IN THOSE TUMULTUOUS DAYS. THE LEGISLATURE HAD NEVER BEEN INTENDED AS A GOVERNING BODY. THE CHURCH OF TARIM INSTITUTED IT WHEN IT BECAME APPARENT (SOME HUNDRED YEARS EARLIER) THAT A DISPROPORTIONATE AMOUNT OF HIS HOLINESS' TIME WAS BEING SPENT ADJUDICATING ECONOMIC MATTERS. HIS SOLUTION WAS TO ALLOW EACH DISTRICT OF THE CITY-STATE, IN PROPORTION TO THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE ECONOMY, TO SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO DEBATE AND FORM ECONOMIC POLICY FOR THE MOTHER CHURCH. THESE REPRESENTATIVES WERE APPOINTED BY THE LOCAL CHURCHES AND THEN ELECTED BY THE LOCAL PEOPLE TO SERVE EITHER AS CONSERVATIVE OR LIBERTINE ECONOMISTS IN IEST. IT WAS STRICTLY A MATTER OF EVOLUTION WHICH LED TO PRIME MINISTER GATSON'S CORRUPT REGIME; THE BORROWING OF MILLIONS OF CROWNS; THE INTER-CONNECTED HOUSE OF CARDS THAT WAS IEST'S INTERNATIONAL TRADE BALANCES; ALL DISCRETELY HIDDEN FROM PAPAL AUTHORITY AND OVERVIEW BY SEVERAL TONS OF OBFUSCATING PAPERWORK. IT WAS HIS SENSE OF SOMETHING BEING HORRIBLY AMISS AND HIS INABILITY TO DISCOVER JUST WHAT IT WAS WHICH LED HIS HOLINESS TO INSTITUTE AN INQUISITION INTO CORRUPTION IN THE LEGISLATURE. AND IT WAS THE APPOINTED GRAND INQUISITOR WHO, AFTER A SERIES OF MEETINGS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, DECIDED THAT THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM WAS DEMONS INHABITING MANY MEMBERS OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY. UNDOUBTEDLY, HE HAD BEEN OFFERED AND HAD ACCEPTED A BRIBE TO LEAVE THE PRIME MINISTER ALONE AND HAD ACCEPTED AN OBVIOUS SOLUTION BY INSTITUTING A REIGN OF TERROR. IT IS GENERALLY OVERLOOKED THAT ALL OF THE WEALTHY MERCHANTS AND TRADERS WHO WERE BROKEN ON THE RACK WERE "STRIPPED OF THEIR WORLDLY GOODS" (TO QUOTE THE EDICT). THESE WORLDLY GOODS WERE THEN SPLIT THREE WAYS-- ONE SHARE FOR THE PRIME MINISTER, ONE FOR THE GRAND INQUISITOR AND ONE FOR THE PAPAL VAULTS WHERE IT COULD BE USED AS SOLID EVIDENCE THAT THE INQUISITION WAS HAVING A POSITIVE EFFECT ON IEST'S ECONOMY. THIS CONTINUED UNTIL THE GRAND INQUISITOR DEMANDED AND RECEIVED (FROM A VERY RELIEVED PONTIFF) THE TITLE OF EARTH-BORN MESSENGER, WHICH TECHNICALLY PLACED HIM ABOVE THE PONTIFF IN THE RELIGIOUS (THOUGH NOT THE POLITICAL) INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE CHURCH. THE POSITION, HOWEVER WAS A DANGEROUS ONE TO HOLD, BECAUSE IT FIGURED IN NO LESS THAN FIFTY SACRED TEXTS. THE GRAND INQUISITOR BECAME THE FOCUS OF AN IMMENSE CHARISMATIC CULT WITHIN THE CHURCH. IF HE SNEEZED, IT MEANT THIS; IF HE SPILLED A GLASS OF WATER, IT MEANT THAT. WHEN HE WAS ASSASSINATED, IT WAS THIS CULT WHICH PERSUADED HIS HOLINESS THAT THE APOCALYPSE WAS AT HAND AND WHICH CONVINCED HIM TO INITIATE THE "EXODUS INWARD" PREDICTED SEVERAL HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE WHICH REQUIRED THE CHURCH TO "SEAL ITS DOORS AGAINST THE HORROR" AND TO SEVER ALL CONNECTION WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD. ALL OF THE TRIPE WRITTEN ABOUT IRRESISTIBLE POLITICAL FORCES AT WORK AND LORD JULIUS' MASTER PLAN IS SO MUCH ROMANTIC HOGWASH. WHEN THE CHURCH SEALED ITSELF UP IN THE SACRED CATHEDRAL, IEST BECAME A BODY WITHOUT A HEAD AND NATURALLY TURNED TO THE COMING ELECTION AS THE ONLY MEANS OF RESTORING SOME MANNER OF GOVERNING AUTHORITY...

FROM "THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE 1413 ELECTION" BY SUENTEUS PO



Northbell
Storm'send Manor
North Road
The Oldcastle Road
Fold River Road
I WANT YOU TO GO OVER TO THAT FARMER'S OLD HOVEL AND ASK FOR CLEAR AND SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS TO STORM'SEND MANOR AND I DON'T WANT YOU TO COME BACK UNTIL YOU HAVE THEM. UNDERSTAND?
YES, M'LUM...
I'M GONNA FREEZE T'DEAT' OUT HE' AN' MY NO-GOOD COUSIN IS GONNA ROB ME MUDDAH BLOIND. I NOW IT.
I'M SARRY, MA.
HONESTLY-- THE DRIVERS YOU GET THESE DAYS ARE SO INCOMPETENT...
WE PROBABLY PASSED STORM'S-END MANOR AN HOUR AGO...
DID YOU ASK?
YES, M'LUM.
WELL? WHAT DID HE SAY?
IT SEEMS THE OLD HOVEL IS STORM'SEND MANOR, MU'LUM.

CAMPAIGN'S END

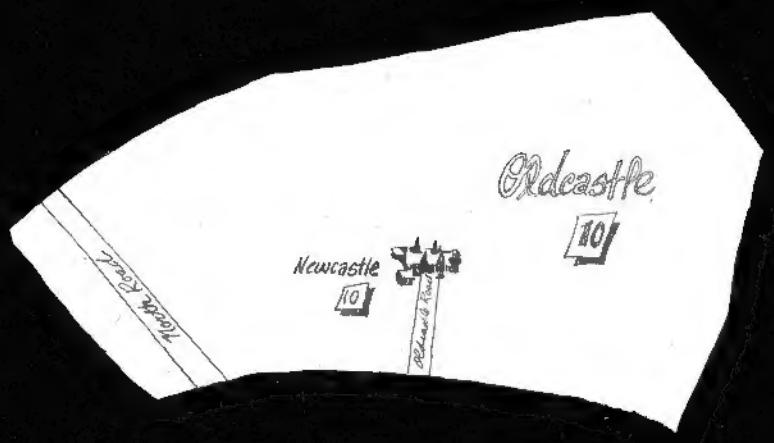
YOU'RE REALLY LORD STORM'SEND --THE OVERSEER OF NORTHBELL?
I MEAN THE LORD STORM'SEND
YES'M--THAT'S WHAT THE FELLER WITH THE PAINTED-ON-MUSTACHE KEPT ASKIN' ME...
LORD JULIUS HAS BEEN HERE?
YES'M--KEPT TELLIN' ME I HAD T' ELECT A GOAT AS PRIME MINISTER
I TOLD'M THERE WAS NO NEED--WE'VE ALREADY HAD A GOAT AS PRIME MINISTER FER NIGH ON FOURTEEN YEAR.

I'D TAKE A SCRAPER TO THAT IF I WAS YOU, MA'AM.
NO TELLIN' WHAT SHE'S GOT BAKED IN 'ER COOKIES.
OL' BESSY'S BIN FEELIN' FORELY LAST FEW DAY.

I'LL TELL YOU THE SAME THING I TOLD THE PAINTED-UP-FELLER...
I HASN'T VOTED MYSELF FER A P'LITICAL PARTY AN' I DON'T AIM T'START NOW -- AS FER THE FOLKS AROUND THESE PARTS...
SCRAPE SCRAPE
AH LET THE WAY THEY VOTE DECIDE WHO GITS OUR FIVE REPRESENTATIVES
OR PORTION THEREOF.
YOU MISSED SOME BY THE HEEL...
BUT DON'T YOU SEE THE BENEFIT FOR NORTHBELL IN HAVING REPRESENTATION IN THE WINNING PARTY?
WAL, MA'AM, THE ONLY TIME WE VOTED WITH THE WINNERS, WE HAD RUST ON THE CROPS ...
AND A DRY SPELL THET LASTED EIGHT WEEK.
BUT--THAT WAS ONLY A COINCIDENCE, SURELY...
MEBBE SO...
BUT AROUND THESE PARTS, WE TRY T'MAKE SURE OUR COINCIDENCES ONLY COINCIDE ONCE.
KNOCK WOOD.
TAP TAP

T'ANA AND DISTRICT SAY THEY'LL BACK US IF ASTORIA IS KEPT OUT OF ANY POSITION INVOLVING MILITARY SPENDING ...
SINCE WE'VE ALREADY AGREED TO KEEP HER IN A SUB-CABINET, ADVISORY-ONLY POSITION, THAT GIVES US A PRETTY LIMITED SET OF OPTIONS ...
I FIGYUH IT LEAVES US WIT' CHIEF O' PROTOCOL, OFFICIAL HOSTESS OR JUNIUH ADVISUH.
MAYBE IF WE JUST COMBINE ALL THREE AND GIVE HER A HAT WITH A WHISTLE.
HAH-HAHH
HOHOHOHO
HEEEHEEH
SNICKER
SNICKER
"HAT WITH A WHISTLE"
HA-HA-HA
HAR-HAR
NO.
SERIOUSLY.

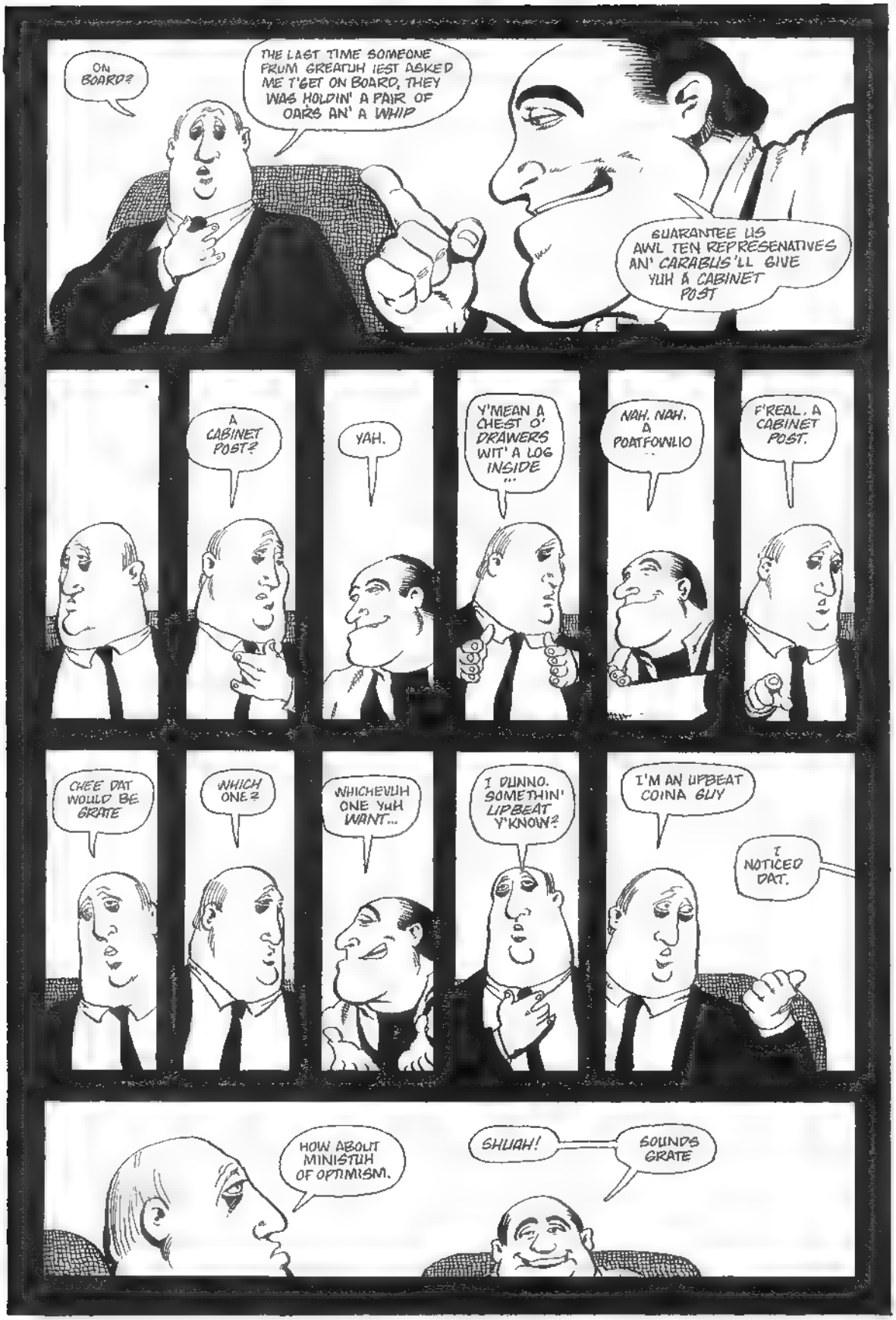
THE IMPLICATIONS WERE CLEAR ONCE THE BATTLE-LINES HAD BEEN DRAWN BETWEEN ASTORIA'S THEOCRATS AND LORD JULIUS' DEVOTIONALISTS THAT THE PRIMARY ISSUE WAS FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF THE CITY-STATE OF IEST. THOSE WHO FELT THAT IEST'S FATE WAS ALREADY INEXTRICABLY BOUND TO THAT OF PALNU (AND, CONSEQUENTLY, TO THAT OF ITS CHARISMATIC LEADER) WERE QUITE PREPARED TO ELECT A GOAT TO THE OFFICE OF PRIME MINISTER, WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE NEXT STEP (ANNEXATION, MILITARY INVASION, ETC.) WOULD BE UP TO LORD JULIUS. IT IS A SIGN OF THE NEAR-COMPLETE COLLAPSE OF THE IESTAN ECONOMY THAT SO MANY PEOPLE EMBRACED THIS SOLUTION. THOSE WHO ADVOCATED IESTAN SOVEREIGNTY ALLIED THEMSELVES WITH ASTORIA AND CEREBUS, THE ONLY TWO INDIVIDUALS KNOWN TO HAVE LEFT LORD JULIUS' INNER CIRCLE. IT MUST BE ADDED THAT THERE WAS A SIGNIFICANT PERCENTAGE OF THE IESTAN POPULATION WHO FELT ASTORIA AND LORD JULIUS WERE STILL ALLIED AND THAT THEIR DIVORCE WAS A TRICK TO ELIMINATE SUSPICION OF THIS FACT.



IT TOOK FIVE YEARS, BUT I TOLD YUH I'D COME UP HE'E SUM DAY.
FILGATE! C'MON IN. GOOD T'SEE YUH. GOOD T'SEE YUH.
SWELL PLACE Y'GOT HE'E.
YAH. YAH. SWELL PLACE.
BUT IT'S NOT LIKE THE OLD NEIGHBUHOOD Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
YAH.
I MEAN--THE OLD NEIGHBUHOOD WAS TOUGH Y'KNOW?
YAH?
ARE YOU KIDDIN'-- I'M TALKIN' TOUGH HE'E. I USED T'HAVE T'WEAR A HELMET, THREE LAYERS OF MAIL AND A BUCKLUH...
AN' THAT WUZ JUST T'GO T'TH' TOILET.
TOUGH. TOUGH NEIGHBUHOOD.
THE OLD NEIGHBUHOOD THEY'D DRAW AN' QUARTUH Y'AT TH' PRE-TRIAL HEARING
...T'SAVE TIME.

AND THE COPS WERE TOUGH.
TOUGH COPS.
YOU KIDDIN'? THEY DIDN'T COME ANY TOUGHUH.
A COP ON OUR BLOCK USED T' CHEW HIS NAILS...
THE TWO-INCH ROOFING KIND.
TOUGH. TOUGH COPS.
HAVE A SEAT.
THANKS
SO WHAT BRINGS YOU UP HERE?
WELL, Y'KNOW THE ELECTION IS...
ELECTIONS.
AHH--I DON'T KNOW
ELECTIONS.
EVERY FOUR YEARS Y'GET T'MAKE YOUR LAST MISTAKE WORSE, Y'KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
I GOT A COUSIN WHOSE A REPRESENTATIVE F'GARRISON
SAYS HE WANTS T'BE A BACK-BENCHUH...
SO HE CAN LOOK DOWN ASTORIA'S DRESS.
AHH. BUT IT'S ROUGH, Y'KNOW?
ROUGH.
ROUGH. A'YOU KIDDIN'?

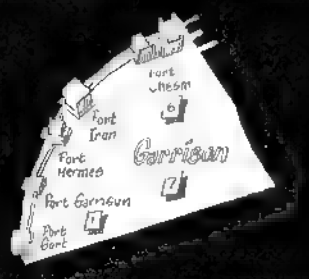
I SENT A REQUEST IN FOR AN OFFENSIVE MILITARY WEAPON TO PROTECT NEWCASTLE.
THEY SENT ME AN ARMY COOK WIT' TYPHOID...
I NOW. I NOW. WAL...
AND Y'CAN'T GET GOOD HELP NOWADAYS, Y'KNOW?
I GOT AN ASSISTANT THINKS Y'STOP INFLATION BY SHOOTING POOR PEOPLE.
I REMEMBER WHEN BEING POOR WAS A VERY SPECIALIZED TRADE. NOW EVERYONE'S GETTING INTO IT...
WHAT I'M HERE TO...
AN' KIDS T'DAY! LISTEN. DON'T GET ME STAHTED ON THAT.
MY YOUNGEST BOY -- I ASK HIM WHAT HE WANTS F'R 'IS BIRTHDAY.
HE SAYS "UNSHIB"
CARABUS WANTS T'NOW IF YOUAH GOING T'BE ON BOARD WITH US FOR DE ELECSHUN.


ON BOARD?
THE LAST TIME SOMEONE FRUM GREATUH IEST ASKED ME T'GET ON BOARD, THEY WAS HOLDIN' A PAIR OF OARS AN' A WHIP
GUARANTEE US AWL TEN REPRESENATIVES AN' CARABUS'LL GIVE YUH A CABINET POST
A CABINET POST?
YAH.
Y'MEAN A CHEST O' DRAWERS WIT' A LOG INSIDE ...
NAH. NAH. A POATFONLIO
F'REAL. A CABINET POST.
CHEE DAT WOULD BE GRATE
WHICH ONE?
WHICHEVUH ONE YUH WANT...
I DUNNO. SOMETHIN' UPBEAT Y'KNOW?
I'M AN UPBEAT COINA GUY
I NOTICED DAT.
HOW ABOUT MINISTUH OF OPTIMISM.
SHUAH!
SOUNDS GRATE

SAY! THIS WAS SWELLA YOU..
WAL.. Y'FRUM D'OLD NEIGHBUHOOD Y'KNOW?
I KNOW WATCHA MEAN IT'S LOYALTY, Y'KNOW?
NOBODY'S LOYAL ANYMORE.
FRIEND'A MINE HADDA BASSET HOUND THAT FINGERED HIM F'TWO FRENCH POODLES AN' A CHEWY-BONE
THING LIKE THAT'LL REALLY HURT A GUY, Y'KNOW?
SWELL IF YOU'LL JUST SIGN THIS PIECE O' PAPUH..
SIGN. YAH WHY NOT?
WHATSA MATTUH?
LAST TIME I DIDN'T READ THE FINE PRINT ..
AND I ENDED UP ORDERING A QUARTER-TON O' GOAT CHOW.

Fort Bilin
Fort Cleese
4
Fort Dead Parrot
Fort Trof
Fort Frot
Fort Tortle
Fort Tary
3
Fort Grit
PARMOOR
4
OH, FINE! SO I'M SUPPOSED TO MAINTAIN THE WORLD'S MOST SOPHISTICATED DEFENSE SYSTEM AGAINST INVADIN' BARBARIAN 'ORDES FOR THE THREE MEASLY MILLION CROWNS Y'SEND UP 'ERE ON A BLEEDIN' TURTLE WITH GOUT AFTER EVERY DAM BLEEDIN' BUDGET IS PASSED BY THAT QUIBBLIN' QUORUM OF HALF FORMED INTELLIGENCES YOU CALL A LEGISLATURE; NOT TO MENTION THE FACT THAT THE BUNDLE ENDS UP BEING AT LEAST FORTY THOUSAND CROWNS SHY OF A LOAD EVERY BLEEDIN' TIME IT GETS 'ERE.
AN' NOW 'ERE YOU ARE, REGULAR AS FLAMIN' CLOCKWORK, SNIFFIN' AROUND PARMOOR'S ELECTORAL CROTCH FOR TARIM-ONLY-KNOWS WHAT KIND OF A CONTRA MORAL SELLOUT OF WOT Y'SNIGGERINGLY REFER TO AS THE COMMON PEOPLE, WITHOUT SO MUCH AS AN 'ALF-CROWN'S NOTICE OF THE GREAT FESTERIN' PIMPLE OF RESENTMENT THAT 'AS BEEN GROWIN' FOR DECADES TOWARDS A PUSTULOID EXPLOSION OF SUCH OMINOUS PROPORTIONS, THAT IT IS ONCE MORE LEFT T' YOUR OBEDIENT SERVANT ALONE..
TO ATTEMPT TO ALERT THE SELF-DELUDIN', BOTTOM-WIPIN' TOADIES OF THE REAL POWER-BROKERS TO THE IMMINENT COLLAPSE OF THE FRONTIERS OF THIS RIDICULOUS EXCUSE FOR A CITY-STATE DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF THE LAST OF THE TRULY PATRIOTIC AND INCORRUPTIBLE ELEMENTS IN THIS ULCEROUS SORE OF AN ODGE-PODGE REPUBLICAN DOG'S BREAKFAST IN THE 'OPES THAT BY SOME MANNER OF COW-TOWIN' OSMOSIS
THE MESSAGE OF SAID IMMINENT COLLAPSE MIGHT, THROUGH SOME 'ITHERTO UN-EXPLORED AUDITORY AVENUE, REACH THE LAVENDAR-SCENTED EAR OF SOME UNSEEN, ILL-EQUIPPED AND SELF-APPOINTED PULLER OF STRINGS, WHO MIGHT, 'OWEVER IMPROBABLE IT MIGHT SEEM, TAKE 'IS THUMB OUT OF 'IS BLEEDIN' GOB, LONG ENOUGH T' TAKE SOME NOTICE AND TAKE THE FIRST BLEEDIN' STEP TOWARDS ANYTHIN' FAINTLY RESEMBLIN' POSITIVE BLEEDIN' ACTION.
THUNK!

FURTHERMORE, IF THERE IS NO MOVEMENT TOWARD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASIN' THE SAID NIGGARDLY SUM OF THREE MILLION CROWNS, I CAN QUI'E ASSURE THE CANDIDATE THAT WITHIN A FORTNIGHT, WE SHALL BE UP TO OUR COD-PIECES IN FOUL-SMELLIN', GIBBERISH-SPOUTIN', VIRGIN-RAPIN', SHORT, YELLOW, SLANTY-EYED HSIFFIES, TO WHOM, HAVIN' DONE MY BEST FOR TARIM AND COUNTRY, I'LL BE PLEASED TO GIVE DETAILED AND COMPLETE INSTRUCTIONS ON ALL ROADS LEADIN' TO THE REGENCY 'OTEL WITH A DETAILED FLOOR PLAN OF THE FIFTH LEVEL AND A BRIGHT RED "X" INDICATING THE PRECISE LOCATION OF THE AMBASSADOR SUITE.
THUNK!
HOW ABOUT WE STICK WITH THE THREE MILLION, BUT CEREBUS WILL AGREE TO DEPOSIT FIFTEEN THOUSAND CROWNS IN YOUR LEGENDARY UNNUMBERED T'CAPMIN BANK ACCOUNT
THIRTY.
TWENTY.
TWENTY FIVE
SOLD



I FEEL COMPELLED TO REITERATE THAT THE ELECTION OF 1413 WAS A GIANT STEP FORWARD FOR ESTARCION DESPITE THE BEST EFFORTS OF THE RULING CLASSES TO DOWNPLAY ITS SIGNIFICANCE. FOR THE FIRST TIME AN ELECTION INCLUDED ALL ELEMENTS OF A SOCIETY -- SOLDIERS, MERCHANTS, LABOURERS, FARMERS. THERE WAS DOUBLE-VOTING, SPOILED BALLOTS, CORRUPTION OF ALL KINDS -- BUT THE PROCESS ITSELF MUST BE VIEWED AS FAR PURER THAN THE OLIGARCHY, THE THEOCRATIC APPOINTMENT, THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP. WHETHER SUCH A CHANCE JUXTAPOSITION OF ELEMENTS WILL EVER OCCUR AGAIN IS DOUBTFUL. I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL THAT OUR SOCIETY IS THE POORER FOR IT. (EDITOR'S NOTE: THE READER SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THAT SUENTEUS PO IS AN ANARCHIST. CONSEQUENTLY, WHERE HE ATTEMPTS TO INTERPRET, RATHER THAN DOCUMENT EVENTS, HIS VIEWS SHOULD BE DISCOUNTED UTTERLY).

YOU WERE SAYING... AH! THE PRIME MINISTER! GOOD MAN THAT GATSON
DAMN GOOD MAN
GATSON RESIGNED IN DISGRACE .. I'M CEREBUS ...I'M CAMPAIGNING FOR PRIME MINISTER
AH! CAMPAIGNING! YES..
BEEN FOUR YEARS ALREADY HAS IT?
REMARKABLE
SINCE ALL THE SOLDIERS HERE ARE UNDER YOUR DIRECT COMMAND , CEREBUS WANTS TO KNOW IF THERE'S ANYTHING YOU...
...NEED
NEED?
WELL, I COULD USE SOME MORE CROSSBOWMEN-- I CAN TELL YOU THAT MUCH
THEN YOU'D BE WILLING TO SIGN THIS PAPER?
PAPER?
GUARANTEEING CEREBUS ALL SEVEN OF THIS PROVINCES REPRESENTATIVES
YOU CAN JUST WRITE "TWO HUNDRED CROSSBOWMEN" IN THE BLANK SPACE
THIS SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER, YES,
THIS WILL BE JUST FINE.
PLEASURE DOING BUSINESS WITH YOU,
LIKEWISE, I'M SURE
OO WAS THAT COMMANDER?
MM?
OH, THAT WAS THE GOAT THEY SAY IS RUNNING FOR PRIME MINISTER

THE REGENCY
TWO WEEKS LATER
ALL RIGHT CEREBUS WILL EXPLAIN IT ONCE MORE
THE FIRST THIRTY-EIGHT SEATS IN GREATER IEST, BLAKELY AND HARBOURSIDE, ASTORIA KNEW ABOUT. THEN CEREBUS GOT FIFTEEN REPRESENTATIVES FROM GRACE DISTRICT THAT ASTORIA DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT
DEAL WITH OLDHAM SHE DID KNOW ABOUT FOR SIX MORE SEATS
THEN WE SIGNED A DEAL WITH OLDCASTLE, SHE KNEW ABOUT, FOR ANOTHER TEN AFTER THE TWENTY IN GREATER IEST WERE REDUCED TO EIGHT...
MEANING WE LOST TWELVE BUT GAINED TEN, AFTER WHICH, CEREBUS PICKED UP FOURTEEN MORE FROM T'ANA, FORT TORY AND GARRISON THAT ASTORIA DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT

SO CEREBUS ENDED UP WITH FIFTY-NINE GUARANTEED SEATS IN THE LEGISLATURE HAVING NEEDED ONLY FIFTY-ONE SEATS FOR A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT.
WHILE ASTORIA...
GLP
GLP
GLP
WHILE ASTORIA ONLY KNOWS OF FORTY-FOUR SEATS GUARANTEED FOR CEREBUS, SEVEN SEATS SHY OF A MAJORITY GOVERNMENT
SO THAT'S WHERE SHE IS NOW...
OUT THERE.
SOMEWHERE
WADING THROUGH HIP-DEEP SNOW.
HER AND THAT SIX FOOT BUG OF HERS
LOOKING FOR SEVEN MORE REPRESENTATIVES
WHY DID YOU SMILE WHEN YOU SAID THAT?
DID CEREBUS SMILE WHEN HE SAID THAT?
YES, YOU DEFINITELY SMILED WHEN YOU SAID THAT..

F-FROSTONITE
EV-EVERYWHERE
G-GETTING
W-WEAK
FROSTONITE: FRAGMENTS OF INTENSE COLD FORMED WHEN THE MOON ROACH'S NATIVE PLANET FROSTON EXPLODED.
TH-TH-ANK Y-Y-YOU K-KEVITCH
D-D-DADDY?
M-M-MARLON?
G-SOMEBODY?
G-G-GREAT FROSTON! -- A-A-ASTORIA C-C-COMING TH-THIS WAY! IF SH-SH-SHE SEES ME SH-SH-SHIVERING LIKE TH-THIS
SH-SHE'LL KNOW I'M TH-THE MOON R-R-ROACH..,

HERE!
I MANAGED TO FIND A SHOPKEEPER WHO HAD ONE FOR SALE
THE NEXT TIME I TELL YOU IT'S TOO COLD TO GO OUT IN JUST A BODY-STOCKING
YOU DAMN WELL BETTER LISTEN!
FORTUNATELY, ASTORIA IS DISTRACTED AND FAILS TO NOTICE HOW HIS BODY IS SHAKING...
HIS SECRET IS SAFE --BUT FOR HOW LONG?!
HOW LONG?
YOU'RE LIKE A THREE YEAR-OLD --EXCEPT YOU HAVEN'T GOT HALF THE COMMON SENSE OF ONE...

AS FOR THE SO-CALLED "ONE-SHEETS" ONE WOULD BE HARD-PRESSED TO FIND A LESS SUITABLE APPENDAGE TO THE BODY POLITIC. IF, AS WAS DEVOUTLY WISHED IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER, WE ARE SOME DAY TO WITNESS FULL-BLOWN REPUBLICANISM IN-DEED, SURELY THE FIRST CASUALTY OF THE PEOPLE'S WILL WOULD BE THESE BRAZEN TESTIMONIALS TO THE COLOSSAL VANITY OF THE RULING CLASSES! SHAMELESSLY SLANTED, IMPERVIOUS TO TRUTH AND CATERING ONLY TO THOSE ASPECTS OF HUMAN NATURE WHICH MIGHT BEST BE DESCRIBED AS "BASE..."

THE SUN

AARDVARK CLAIMS VICTORY

"NO COMMENT," SAYS GOAT

The Times

AARDVARK [illegible]

GOAT [illegible] SILENCE ON CONTROVERSY

THE SUN

AARDVARK CHALLENGES GOAT TO PUBLIC DEBATE

...DEVOID OF EVEN ELEMENTARY GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX, RELIANT ON THE PRESENT PERFECT TENSE (EVIDENTLY TO CREATE SOME SHODDY ILLUSION OF IMMEDIACY) THE "ONE-SHEETS" GAINED SOME SMALL ADMIRATION FOR PROVIDING THE MASSES WITH THEIR OWN LITERATURE (THOUGH ONE HESITATES TO DIGNIFY IT WITH SUCH A LABEL).

The Times

GOAT LOSES VOICE IN FREAK ACCIDENT

"..." SAYS GOAT!

THE SUN

"MUTE GOAT UNSUITED TO BE P.M." SAYS AARDVARK

The Times

GOAT ACCUSES AARDVARK OF PREJUDICE AGAINST HANDICAPPED

"..." SAYS GOAT

THE SUN

"FARM ANIMALS UNSUITED FOR POLITICS" SAYS AARDVARK

The Times

CHICKENS, COWS, HORSES PLAN PROTEST RALLY TO SUPPORT GOAT

ONE CAN, AT LEAST, FEEL CERTAIN THAT THESE MELODRAMATIC PAPERS WOULD NOT LAST LONG IN A FREELY-GOVERNED, FREELY-ELECTED SOCIETY! SURELY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PEOPLE'S WILL WOULD TEAR AWAY THE MASKS CONCEALING THE PRODUCERS OF SUCH ILL-MINDED, SELF-SERVING CLAPTRAP...
THE SUN
AARDVARK MAKES BIG GAINS IN FARMING DISTRICTS
SWEEPS OLDCASTLE REPS
The Times
"BAAAH" SAYS GOAT. "AARDVARK COUNTING VOTES BEFORE ELECTION DAY"
THE SUN
AARDVARK URGES PUBLIC DEBATE AS GOAT RECOVERS VOICE
...AND THAT THE PEOPLE, WHEN THEY REALIZED THE SPECIAL INTERESTS OF THE PRODUCERS, WOULD DEMAND INSTEAD PUBLICATION OF "TRUTH" AS DETERMINED BY A MAJORITY OF THEIR OWN FREELY-ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES...
The Times
"..." SAYS GOAT AS RELAPSE CLAIMS VOICE
THE SUN
ASTORIA [redacted] TO DEBATE LORD JULIUS AFTER RELAPSE
The Times
"..." [redacted] LORD JULIUS AS "MUTE PLAGUE" SPREADS
THE SUN
AARDVARK LEADS IN ALL DISTRICTS
VICTORY AS[redacted]
The Times
ELECTION TOMORROW VOTE GOAT!
THE SUN
AARDVARK PREPARES MASSIVE VICTORY CELEBRATION
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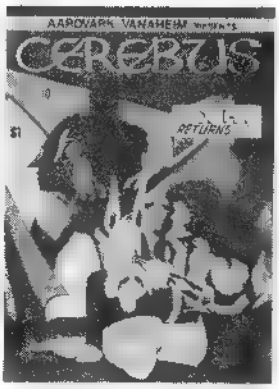

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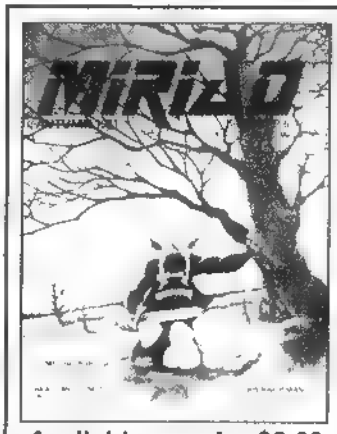

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KRRRR EEEEEEK!!
brusha brusha brusha
brusha
brusha brusha brusha brusha brusha brusha brusha brusha

CREAK!
DRIP!
DRIP!
SMILIN' ED!
DRIP!
DRIP!
SOMP!

GRAB!
MAAAMAAAA
MMMPHHH!
BLU
LUB
BLUB
BBLUB
GIN
SLURP!
FLUSHHHH!
THE END

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AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave and Deni

I told myself that I wouldn't write until I had some decent criticism. I gave in and decided to write anyway.

This issue (#39) lacks the intensity of the other recent issues. It was a loose issue that went through a variety of people that Cerebus knows. So Cerebus is running for Prime Minister of Iest, is he? What does Lord Julius have up his sleeve? Maybe Astoria is secretly against Lord Julius and plans to overthrow him using the bug, Moon Roach. Getting Cerebus and Elrod into high-ranking political positions is part of his plan to stop Astoria. This leads to Lord Julius' closet discussion with Cerebus and Elrod (hint).

Of course, Cerebus is the downfall of Julius' plans. It seems to me that Cerebus is fed up with politics, or at least, with losing at politics. He won't be happy until he is in control of his own life. If my ideas are right, he might even create some sort of dictatorship.

We are seeing the fall of an empire, aren't we? (Long live the new empire) I've got a zillion questions that I would like to see answered before this 300-issue "novel" is finished. I hope that Cerebus' ultimate destiny is earth-shaking, gigantic, that is. There is evidence that Fate has something big in store for the earth-pig. After all, he's run into a statue of a deity that looks familiar (#5). The "Tomes of the Black Sun" mention a similar nameless god. More recently, the Regency Elf seems to know more than she's telling about early history (#39), all of which indicates that aardvarks were once an important race of "people" in the world. Cerebus is an indication that they will be again. There's also the matter of those prophecies given by the stranger in #35 (who is he?).

Of course I want to eventually find out about Cerebus' past, from baby aardvark to sorcerer's apprentice to the events that took place in #1. In other words, his first twenty-six years of life.

I would like to see Cerebus make better use of his knowledge. I mean, he studied sorcery for three years when he was a teenager. Surely that was good for something.

I can't wait for Mind Game III. Does Cerebus reach the Ninth Sphere? How does he reach these spheres of meditation that take so much meditating by Suentues Po?

Could you keep making "Aardvark Comment" three pages long? I like your long answers. An informative letters page is more fun than one filled with praise.

Speaking of praise you deserve some for breathing life into an alternate world (universe, actually, but I doubt that we'll be seeing offworlders). I hope this world and it's history are explored thoroughly before the "novel" is finished.

Before closing, I'd like to ask a few stray questions.

Are there any more "super-heroic bugs" in this world?

Will we ever see Melvinbone, or any more of Elrod's dying race?

What was the Regency Elf before the Regency Hotel came along? She has been here before there were Prime Ministers, after all.

Does the scene on pages twelve and thirteen of #32 indicate that Cerebus has mental powers, weak sorcerous powers, or was it the Elf's own powers that caused it?

Will the character Death from #4 ever have another part to play in Cerebus' life?

I don't expect answers to these last few questions. Just keep them in mind as you plot page after page of Cerebus.

The best of luck on Cerebus until #300!

Michael Clem
308 South 200 E Ave
Tulsa OK 74108

I'm going to number your questions, since you forgot to.

1) Yes
2) his arm
3) No you're seeing the metamorphosis of a city-state. The fall of an empire is happening a few hundred miles to the west.
4) Bran Mak Mufin, from issue 5, just better-dressed.
5) Possibly.
6) All is not what it seems (sahib).
7) Deni cut me back to two, but she let me use pictures to make up for it (Deni just decided to apologize, it was just a temporary problem!).
8) Nope.
9) Not in Estarcion.
10) She was one of the Wood Elves in Iest.
11) No, no and partly.
12) He plays a major role in issue #300 (obviously).

Dear Dave and Deni

I'm just writing to commend you on your last two issues (#'s 39 & 40). I was a little disappointed in the mid-thirties - not that they weren't funny, it just took me about three minutes to read one of them. While I can appreciate the mood set up by all that black, and you *were* a little behind schedule, the lack of interesting backgrounds did little to slow the pace of the story. On the other hand, the Unique stories helped to balance out the issues and I, for one, would like to see them continued. (A suggestion - if you're looking for material there - why not talk Michael T. Gilbert into doing a couple more Wraith stories?) Issues #39 and 40 did a lot to bolster my confidence. "P-Con Day Three" was a slapstick masterpiece. The pace reached such a frantic level, that each panel was good for at least one laugh if not more. "Campaign" was the type of issue I like to see best. It was intricately plotted and had lots of laughs, action and characters. It's really amazing how well you can delineate a character in such brief appearances and how *funny* they can be. Also, the artwork was the best in issues. The drawings of the ferryboat in the rain and the carriage going through Lower Iest particularly stood out.

Your comments on continuity have brought back to mind a couple of questions that have been bugging me for a while.

1) Whatever happened to the eight bags of gold Lord Julius gave to Cerebus? This was an awful lot of money, and it would take even Cerebus a long time to squander it.
2) Whatever happened to Jaka's sister (?) Katrina and the other two school girls?
3) If Cerebus is now twenty-nine, does that mean that he's been living at the Regency for a year now?

On a parting note, I'd like to say that I'm very disappointed by all the bad mail Astoria is getting. Even though I know she's going to screw over Cerebus sooner or later, I still think that she's a lot more interesting than that wimp Jaka.

Scott Campbell
Wright Quad 5-309
Bloomington, In 47406

P.S. I've also enjoyed your Lord Julius transcripts. If you compiled a bunch of these into a separate monthly mag, it'd probably outsell Cerebus.

1) It's still buried under the floorboards of the farmhouse Cerebus bought.
2) Theresa is Astoria's new assistant. Katrina and Janette will be back.
3) He arrived in late summer and it is now early winter of 1413.

AARDVARK COMMENT

P.O. BOX 1674, STATION 'C', KITCHENER, ONTARIO N2G 4R2

Dear Dave and Deni

I am decidedly against Cerebus becoming Prime Minister He has got to be the most selfish character in comics today The last three pages were very meaningful to me because they proved to me that if Cerebus was in power he would abuse it at the expense of the people If he does succeed here's hoping he is overthrown by a revolution or a coup But make sure that Cerebus lives He is simply the best thing to hit comics Without my weekly fix of truly mature comics coming from these pages, life just wouldn't be worth living

Thanks for reprinting the early episodes of Cerebus I have been with you only since issue #23. After a brief stint attempting to collect back issues at a tremendous cost I conceeded defeat Simply put, without Swords of Cerebus, the early collectors' issues would be out of my reach

Robert Tilley
137 Craighurst Ave
Toronto, Ont M4R 1K1

I hope you still find life to be worth living even though Cerebus is a monthly fix If you've found some way to get a weekly fix, don't you think you should tell all of the other junkies. Hmmm?

Dave Sim

Some thoughts, questions, and ideas Numbered, basically for the novelty of numbering them

1) So howcum alluvasuden you signed the cover, the one without the aardvark on it?
2) I've figured it out The value of a "crown" is equivalent to the current price of a copy of Cerebus
3) Is Astoria the first, second, or third wife of Lord Julius?
4) When does the Cerebus movie come out, and when will you be on Late Night with David Letterman?
5) Is Cerebus still available for being a mascot?
6) Who do you have to know to get all the Marvel comics free?
7) Hasn't the Moon Roach gone on long enough? Have the bug psyche into another personality like, maybe the cockroach-man super-cootie?
9) Send advertising rates
10) Will a "Richard Simmons" character come into the book?

This is my philosophy At least it's all I can make up right now So until you wear big wings on your head and give away a free subscription (maybe even after that)

D B Eilers
Box 99-C
Monee Ill 60449

Post Script I'm in love with the Regency Elf

1 It was a good chance to practice my reverse Neal Adams signature in the hopes that someone would offer me an X-men graphic novel to draw Alas Brent Anderson beat me to it
2 Uncanny
3 Third
4 Next week and the week after that
5 Depends on how many crowns you're offering
6 A guy with dark sunglasses names Shiv who works in the mailroom
7 Funny you should mention Super-cootie See page 17
8 You missed #8
9 No
10 No, you silly bitch

Answer to postscript So am I

Dave Sim (the famous aardvark artist) describes how you ink comic books in Canada to an amused Klaus Janson (the famous Daredevil artist) at a recent Toronto convention while Roger Stern (the famous Spiderman writer) gives much needed directions to the washroom to one of his many supporters (not shown)

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